shared on continuous basis and support is provided by way of financial assistance for modernisation of State Police forces and deployment of Central Para-Military Forces. In order to prevent infiltration, border fencing and flood lighting has been undertaken along stretches of the Indo-Pakistan and Indo-Bangladesh borders, besides patroling. Diplomatic initiatives have also been taken with the concerned countries to curb cross-border terrorism.

In pursuance of the offer for talks made by the Government, ceasefire and peace talks with the NSCN (IM) are underway since 1 August 1997. Suspension of operations with the Bodo Liberation Tiger (BLT) was also announced earlier this year. NSCN(K) have also issued a Press Release offering a formal "ceasefire' with the Government of India and political talks.

Attacks on Christians

†5566. SHRI JANESHWAR MISHRA: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a phase of attacks on Christians has started once again in India;

(b) whether it is also a fact that people killed/injured in these incidents are innocent; and

(c) if so, the action being taken by the Government to check such incidents?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOMEAFFAIRS (SHRI CH. VIDYASAGAR RAO): (a) and (b) There have been a few incidents of violence over agitations due to admission/fee hikes in schools, theft/robbery etc. involving members of the Christian community in the recent past, however, these cannot be construed as a phase of attacks against them, as these incidents were related to law and order, where the parties happened to be from different communities by coincidence. Action has been initiated against the accused as per law.

(c) Public Order appears at Entry No. 1 under List-II-State List of the Vllth Schedule of the Constitution of India, and, it is the primary responsibility of the State Govts, to maintain law and order.

Detailed Guidelines on Communal Harmony were issued to all the States/ Union territories on 22.10.1997 suggesting various measures for controlling communal situations and matters connected with it, advisories are also being issued from time to time. The Central Government also assists the States by

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

sharing intelligence, providing Central Para-Miliary Forces on specific request, and by providing funds for modernisation and upgradation of the policing and infrastructure. The Rapid Action Force has been created exclusively to deal with communal violence.

The Government is committed to safeguarding the interests of minorities and bringing to book the perpetrators of violence against them.

Declaration of assets by Ministers

24.┌ . SHRI S. AGNIRAJ: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have announced that each Minister will declare his assets after assuming office;

(b) if so, how many Ministers have declared their assets and the details thereof; and

25.┌ . Iwhat steps are being taken to get these information from all the Ministers in the Cabinet? ,

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOMEAFFAIRS (SHRI I.D. SWAMI): (a) to (c) The Code of Conduct for Ministers provides for furnishing of a declaration by each Minister regarding his assets and liabilities. The contents of the Code have been brought to the notice of the members of the present Council of Ministers.

The statements of assets and liabilities have been received from 17 Ministers. Others have been reminded to expedite the same.

'Exploration of minerals in Maharashtra

26.┌ . SHRI VIJAY J. DARDA: Will the Minister of MINES AND MINERALS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Geological Survey of India and Indian Bureau of Mines and MECL have carried out surveys and exploration of minerals in Maharashtra during the past three years;

(b) if so, the details of the work carried out by these organisations in Maharashtra;

(c) the details of action taken for exploration of- mineral resources of Maharashtra during the past three years, investment made and proposed during the current year and next five years both in public and private sectors; and